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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004517

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRT TIKRIT: THE EFFECT OF DEBAATHIFICATION IN
SALAH AD DIN

Classified By: L. Hatton, PRT Deputy Team Leader, for reasons 1.5 (b) a
nd (d).

11. (U) This is a PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din cable.

12. (C) SUMMARY. In the Baathist heartland of Salah ad
Din (SaD), the effects of de-Baathification and
dismantling of the former Iraqi Army are causing SaD
Sunnis to resist engagement in the political process.
While many SaD residents object to what they see as
overly broad de-Baathification regulations, we more often
hear complaints about the Higher National De-
Baathification Commission's (HNDC) administrative
inadequacies. Over 1,300 former Baathist professionals,
all of whom are Group members (Firqah) or below, believe
they have properly completed applications for exceptions,
but have reportedly not received notice of action on
their cases from the HNDC. Many more government retirees
and former IA officers have been disallowed from
receiving their pensions. SaD Sunnis have largely
accepted that de-Baathification will remain in place, but
they do want to see the regulations relaxed, a HNDC that
functions efficiently when reviewing files, and Sunni
representation on the HNDC (by which they mean a Sunni
who was in the country during Saddam's regime). With
many SaD Sunnis in a wait-and-see mode to determine if
the political process has a place for them, we fear that
if the changes to the De-Baathification regulations do
not allow the SaD Sunnis to return to work and to
participate in government, then we will see those
individuals become more supportive of insurgent elements.
END SUMMARY.

De-Baathification Papers Filed, Yet No Action

13. (C) With the implementation of the CPA orders that
mandated de-Baathification and the dismantling of the
former Iraqi Army, many residents in the Baathist
heartland of Salah ad Din lost their government positions
and pensions. According to detailed lists provided by
SaD HDHC representative Johar Hamad al Jabouri, over
1,300 individuals, all of whom were Group members (Firqah)
and below, believe they completed in 2004 the
Commission's requirements to receive an exception from
de-Baathification orders and apply for reinstatement to
government positions. To date, none of the files have
reportedly been reviewed, and no one has received the
Commission's authorization to return to work. (NOTE:
According to CPA Order 1, CPA Mem 1, and other HNDC
rules, junior members, defined as below Section members
(Shu'bah), have the right to apply for either a
government pension or reinstatement to their government
employment. END NOTE.)

¶4. (C) According to the documentation provided by Johar Hamad, over 450 teachers, 17 Tikrit University professors, 86 healthcare professionals, 4 judges, 330 police officers, and hundreds of other local government technocrats are among those who believe they have fully submitted their files. In addition, many retirees and former IA officers no longer receive their pensions. (NOTE: According to the HNDC, some individuals have been misinformed by provincial officials who told them that they could be reinstated and would receive their pensions. While that information may be correct, those actions cannot move forward until a case is filed with the Commission, which will then notify the Ministry of Finance. The HNDC is working to clarify these misperceptions. END NOTE)

Dismantling of the former IA

¶5. (C) With the dismantling of the former IA, Salah ad Din province lost its major employer and one of its most important social systems. Tribal ties to the former regime encouraged military employment, and it formed the basis of many family's income and status. Johar Hamad was unable to give precise statistics on the number of unemployed former military soldiers and officers, but he predicted it was in the thousands.

Appeasing the Debaathified Sunnis

¶6. (C) According to Johar Hamad and other contacts, the
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SaD Sunnis would like to see de-Baathification regulations relaxed to allow more SaD Sunnis to participate in the political process and return to their jobs, especially highly-skilled professionals like doctors. With regard to the HNDC, they seek a more efficient Commission that includes Sunni representation (by which they mean an individual who was in the country during the former regime). Johar Hamad also said that the HNDC provincial representatives had not been engaged in over a year. He recommended they be brought into the decision making process. In addition, we often hear that former military officers be allow to return to military service, as they are experienced professionals who could do much to improve capabilities of the IA.

Comment

¶7. (C) While de-Baathification is most tangible for the unemployment it has caused, for most Sad Sunnis it has become a symbol of what they perceive to be a Shia dominated government's rejection of their participation in the political process. At present, many SaD Sunnis are in a wait-and-see mode to determine if the political process has a place for them. We fear that if the changes to the De-Baathification regulations do not allow the SaD Sunnis to return to work and to participate in government, then we will see those individuals become more supportive of insurgent elements. END COMMENT.

¶8. (U) For additional reporting from PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din, please see our SIPRNET Reporting Blog:
<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Tikrit>.
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